765 Funeral rites are performed only when a king is buried, but after each death certain mourning customs are observed which are more or less elaborate depending on the social position of the deceased. If the deceased is a common Murundi and also father of a family, his widow (or widows) and children observe a mourning period of seven days by not leaving the homestead. Presumably they are afraid of the spirit of the deceased when going outside the house so shortly after his death. Inside the hut they introduce numerous inovations and rearrangements as though they wanted to lead astray and divert the spirit of the deceased should he decide to return. The entrance to the residential hut is changed to another side, new stones are found for the fireplace, the place of the bed is moved, all the tools are rearranged, and so forth. After the seventh day every [783] member of the family takes a thorough bath in a stream, probably as a symbolic cleansing from the defilement caused by the deceased. Then the whole family have their heads shaved as a symbol of purification and mourning, and during the following two months they always wear clothes of mourning when leaving [292] the house, i.e., barkcloth which is neither dyed black, the normal color, nor painted with patterns (No. 19, p. 163) but [822] has its natural reddish-brown color; thus red is the color of mourning here. The name of the deceased is not mentioned any [551] more so as not to cause his malevolent spirit to appear, and all other persons or objects bearing the same name are given new ones.

766 Naturally a deceased mutwale is given more respect than a common Murundi. For the former the kiranga performs the ● 211 ceremonies of the "holy spear" (see p. 134), and a tree is 768 planted on his grave [115] as a memorial (imana) which is inviolable. The family of the deceased leaves the homestead and settles in another place; the huts of the deceased disintegrate and disappear, and the fig trees that form the fence gradually grow into magnificent trees. Nobody may cut them down for [689] wood on pain of death (No. 19, p. 205). The sites where chiefs once lived, both in Urundi and Ruanda, can be picked out anywhere in the landscape by these groups of trees arranged in a circle where they once enclosed the courtyards (Plate 29a).

775 778 824 211

There are trees, however, that are associated with remembrance of the dead. These trees were planted either by them or in connection with them, usually in the settlements. Thus, at the birth of a child a fig tree is planted, which is later associated with the person, even after his death. It seems that in these trees, as on the hedges of abandoned settlements, spirits of the dead abide.

778 824 211

Trees are also planted in memory of historical events. Thus, Dr. Kandt (1) says: "At the end of the bridge (cliff bridge of the

1. Kandt, R., Caput Nili (Berlin, 1904), p. 365.

Ruzizi) there is still standing a young fig tree, an immana, a soul tree, which was planted by Luabugiri, the former king of Ruanda, when he set out to fight against Bunjabungu which is on the right bank. There is a steep, almost perpendicular path of a few hundred meters, down which he and his warriors set out to their destruction. On the tree hang straw and metal rings, the offerings of pious wanderers, and on the bridge people point out the footprint of the king's favorite dog in the cliff and tell a legend similar to the one about the Rosstrappe [Tr., a rock in the Harz Mountains]."

With reference to another type of memorial tree which is only indirectly connected with historical personages, Dr. Kandt (2)

2. Ibid., p. 504.

says: "They (trees on the eastern point of the lake) are sacred because King Luabugiri camped on this spot when he set out on his campaign against Bunjabungu (1894), from which he returned to Ruanda a dying man.... The boat that carried the ruler into the war is still lying under the trees, half buried in the ground. It was hollowed out from a giant tree of the primeval forest, but now it is split down the middle, partly rotted, and disintegrating more and more each year. As I remember, it is about 18 meters long and one and a quarter meters wide."

The memorial trees looming up on the heights are very characteristic of the Ruanda landscape. They are conspicuous because they form such a contrast to the bare hilltops. Their

778 824 ●211 religious character was already known through Captain Hermann, and they are referred to simply as Imana trees.

It seems to be chiefly the Batutsi who venerate the memorial trees. The fig trees on the heights are most numerous and most beautiful in places where the Batutsi have the greatest power. On the other hand, it is said that sometimes at night Bahutu secretly take wood from the sacred trees. The Batwa, who fear no one and who have also preserved their independence in spiritual matters, do [301] this quite openly in the daytime, but there are not enough of them to destroy the trees and change the landscape.

776 Imana and Batabazi. In our general discussion of the interlacustrine region [not translated], we pointed out that the spirits of dead kings and rulers have a special place among the manes. They are distinguished from the undifferentiated mass of bazimu by their greater power. They are known and feared in larger circles. This is the case, for example, with the spirit of Kimeni in Kissaka. It is not impossible that from this we shall be able to explain the contrast between the rule of Ryangombe in the underworld, which seems to be patterned after the organization of Batutsi states, and the familial anarchy of the ordinary manes. However, it is doubtful whether the central figure of the Ruanda pantheon, the creator of the world, Imana, can be associated with the spirits of the dead. He probably must be considered as derived from foreign influence. Perhaps this also explains the underworld residence of the court of Ryangombe, whereas the rest of the bazimu remain with their living relatives.

776 782 Imana is the lord of lightning, thunder, and rain. One addresses him with the words: "Nabone Imana yandemie ikalema tata, na sokokuru, na sokuruza, na mukaka, na mukakuruzu, na mama. Ikankiza, nkuko yabakidjidji! (Favor me, Imana, who created my father, and my grandfather, and the father of my grandfather, and my grandmother, and the mother of my grandmother, and my mother. He has healed me, how he has healed me!)"

No sacrifices are made to Imana. Thus, he plays no part in the cult and satisfies only, if we may so express it, a philosophical need.